

AT THE SHRINE OF AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER

Drawings by C. B. FALLS

Verses by ARTHUR CHAPMAN

AMERICA'S Unknown Soldier, silent comforter of thousands of mothers whose sons are in unnamed graves in France, will be buried in Arlington Cemetery on Armistice Day, Friday, November 11.

After resting in state for a day and a night under the great dome of the national Capitol, the Unknown Soldier, who might have died in Belleau Wood or at Chateau Thierry, or in the Argonne or the St. Mihiel salient, or who perhaps fell at some lonely outpost, the name of which never will figure in history, will be carried to the nation's great Valhalla.

President Harding, on foot and accompanied by the members of his Cabinet and other officials, will march with the funeral cortege. Former President Wilson, if his health permits, will have his place at the cemetery. For two minutes, by Presidential proclamation, business and pleasure will be suspended everywhere throughout the nation. Men, women and children, in whose behalf the Unknown Soldier gave his life, will pay silent tribute not alone to this one man, but to his 2,000,000 fighting comrades, who without thought of personal reward assumed the heavy burdens of war in defense of liberty.

France, England and Italy have honored their unknown soldiers. The United States has helped, through its personal representatives, in paying tribute to those fallen heroes. Now from the far corners of the world will come tributes to America's Unknown Soldier.

From every state in the Union where there are mothers who have had no word of the last resting places of soldier sons there will come prayers which will indicate that some degree of comfort has been found. For among all those mothers there will not be one who will not have the thought that perhaps her son, whether he be from Maine or Illinois or California, or from the heart of the South, is resting at Arlington beneath all the honors that the world is ready to heap upon the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

A scant two weeks ago the unknown soldier lay in an earth-stained coffin in a flag-decorated room in the City Hall at Chalons-sur-Marne. Three other coffins were in the room. The coffins had been brought there from the four American military cemeteries at Belleau, Bony, Thiencourt and Romagne.

The selecting of the Unknown Soldier from among these four was made a simple and at the same time a beautiful task. A stalwart American sergeant, who had fought in all the American offensives and who wore two wound stripes, walked slowly past the coffins, while in the adjoining room a French infantry band played a funeral dirge. In the corporal's hand was a cluster of white roses.

Twice the soldier paced the length of the room beside his sleeping comrades whom none might ever call again by name. Then he gently placed the roses on the coffin of the one who was to be honored not only by this entire nation, but by all its allies.

The coffin was borne from the room by six other non-commissioned officers while the sergeant stood at attention. It was placed in a casket sent from this country bearing the inscription:

"An unknown American soldier, who gave his life in the great war."

The other coffins, after the Unknown Soldier had thus been chosen, were borne away to be permanently reinterred in Romagne Cemetery.

At the request of the American authorities the ceremony was as simple as possible. A delegation representing the Paris post of the American Legion, two companies of French soldiers and a guard of fifty men from the American army on the Rhine were present. A brief tribute was paid by General Dupont from the French army, and in the afternoon the people of Chalons paid their respects as the body lay in state.

On the following day the body was taken to Havre, where it started its final journey across seas on the United States cruiser Olympia. There was no ceremony of any kind at Paris, at the request of American authorities. The only formal French ceremony took place at Havre when the decoration of the Legion of Honor was placed on the coffin.

On board the Olympia, which bore the body of the Unknown Soldier to the hero's home land, was a large box of earth from the American cemetery at Suresnes. On this earth the coffin of the Unknown Soldier will rest in Arlington Cemetery.

Many and varied are the tributes that will be paid to America's Unknown Soldier on Armistice Day. They will vary from the Victoria Cross—the highest honor within the gift of the British Empire and never hitherto bestowed on any except a British subject—to a wreath of wild flowers picked in the various parts of the Union of South Africa. King George himself expressed his desire that the Victoria Cross be conferred upon America's Unknown Soldier, and hoped that it would be



Unknown?

I have come back to my mother's land—
I was long, too long, away.
She shades her eyes with a blue-veined hand
In the sunlit upland day
And looks at my saddle, my horse, my gun—
For my haunts were not the strenuous.
My Western mother has murmured: "Son!"
So why am I called Unknown?

I have come back to my mother's land,
Where the yellow pine glades are;
The cypress flutters, by warm breeze fanned,
And the rose scent floats afar;
There's a plash of oars on quiet streams
And a bright-hued bird has flown
Like those that colored my youthful dreams
Ere they called me the Great Unknown.

I have come back to my mother's land,
Where the surf 's like distant drums,
And the fishing craft make bright the strand
And a kindly neighbor comes—
For such is the way of the village folk
When a woman is left alone.
It's of me they talk, when she doffs her cloak,
So why am I called Unknown?

For I belong to them—Mothers All—
From the seas to the plains of sage,
From the hills that rock to the snowsides' fall
To the desert gray-lined with age.
And my tomb shall vibrate with messages
All couched in that mother tone
Which stirs the heart. Ah, then, who says
That I have returned Unknown?

accepted "in order that Britain may thus fittingly pay tribute at the tomb which symbolizes every deed of conspicuous valor performed by the men of your great fighting forces."

General Diaz, Italy's greatest warrior, will place upon the casket of the hero at Arlington the Gold Medal for Bravery, the highest Italian military decoration. This country will bestow the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest honorary gift that can be given.

Present at the Armistice Day ceremony to represent the infantry branch of the army will be Sergeant Samuel Woodfill, chosen by reason of his extraordinary heroism. Recently, he was ordered from his station in Kentucky to Washington, where he was received by the Secretary of War, who told him that his record for daring in battle must be regarded as "outstanding" among the exploits of all the infantry officers and men who saw service in the French campaigns.

It is virtually an unknown hero who comes to salute the Unknown Soldier, when "Taps"

sound over his grave. For until the choice was made, the personal selection of General John J. Pershing, chief of staff, Sergeant Woodfill's deeds of remarkable valor had been all but unsung. His exploit which gives him rank with Sergeant Alvin C. York, of the Tennessee mountains, and Major Charles S. Whittlesey, of the "Lost Battalion," occurred on October 12, 1918, during the Meuse-Argonne offensive, when he, as a lieutenant, silenced

three enemy machine guns, killing nineteen of the enemy, and capturing three others.

A portion of General Pershing's report of recommendation described the deeds of the three heroes.

"Outstanding was the heroism of Lieutenant Samuel Woodfill, 5th Division, in attacking single-handed a series of German machine gun nests near Cunel and killing the crews of each in turn until reduced to the necessity of as-

saulting the last detachment with a pick, dispatching them all. And of Sergeant Alvin C. York, of the 82d Division, in standing off and capturing 132 Germans after his patrol was literally surrounded and outnumbered ten to one, and Major Charles S. Whittlesey and his men of the 77th Division, when their battalion was cut off in the Argonne, in refusing to surrender and holding out until finally relieved. Doubtless many died in performing deeds of unknown heroism and no survivor remained to testify."

Army men believe that Sergeant Woodfill's story is best told by the crisp, concise phrases of the citation which accompanied the award to him of the Congressional Medal of Honor. The citation read:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy at Cunel, France, October 12, 1918. While he was leading his company against the enemy, his line came under heavy machine gun fire, which threatened to hold up the advance. Followed by two soldiers at

twenty-five yards, this officer went out ahead of his first line toward a machine gun nest, and worked his way around its flank, leaving two soldiers in front. When he got within ten yards of the gun it ceased firing and four of the enemy appeared, three of whom were shot by Lieutenant Woodfill. The fourth, an officer, rushed at Lieutenant Woodfill, who attempted to club the officer with his rifle. After a hand-to-hand struggle Lieutenant Woodfill killed the officer with his pistol. His company thereupon continued to advance until shortly afterward another machine gun nest was encountered.

"Calling on his men to follow, Lieutenant Woodfill rushed ahead of his line in the face of heavy fire from the nest, and when several of the enemy appeared above the nest he shot them, capturing three members of the crew and silencing the gun. A few minutes later this officer for the third time demonstrated conspicuous daring by charging another machine gun position, killing five men in one machine gun pit with his rifle. He then drew his revolver and started to jump into the pit when two other gunners, only a few yards away, turned their gun on him.

"Failing to kill them with his revolver, he grabbed a pick lying near by and killed both of them. Inspired by the exceptional courage displayed by this officer, his men pressed on to their objective under severe shell and machine gun fire."

Woodfill was mustered out of the war army as a captain. He re-enlisted in the regular service, in which he has been twenty-two years, and regained his pre-war rank of sergeant.

Representatives of every branch of the American fighting service will be grouped about the last resting place of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington. The Marines have chosen as their representative to act as pall-bearer Gunnery Sergeant Ernest A. Janson, who wears the Congressional Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry at Chateau Thierry.

One of the most touching tributes will be from British mothers, who have expressed a desire to honor America's unknown hero. Mrs. William Henry McCudden, of Kingston-on-Thames, mother of Major James Byford McCudden, K. C., who brought down fifty-seven German airplanes during the war before he was killed in July, 1918, has been chosen to take to America a memorial wreath for the grave of the Unknown Soldier. Mrs. McCudden lost three sons, a son-in-law and two nephews in the war.

France's Unknown Soldier is buried under the Arc de Triomphe. England's representative of its unknown dead in the great war is resting in Westminster Abbey. Italy has buried its Unknown Soldier at the Altar of the Fatherland, which has been erected near the monument to King Victor Emmanuel. When the idea of paying similar tribute to America's Unknown Soldier was brought up many thought that the hero should be buried at some spot where his memorial would appeal constantly to thousands. It was suggested that the burial place be near some square in the business heart of New York City, or that the Unknown Soldier be buried in front of the main stairway of the Capitol at Washington, but Congress finally directed by resolution the ceremonies that have been outlined, selecting Arlington Cemetery as the resting place.

About 2,000 soldiers and sailors of the regular army, navy and Marine Corps are to be assembled at Washington, and one battalion of the National Guard will be taken from New York and Pennsylvania. The plan contemplates the selection of not to exceed three members of the American Legion from every state in the Union, according to the number of troops sent from those states. The Governors of the states are to appoint such representatives, and the Governors themselves will take part in the ceremony.

It is planned to bring to Washington all Medal of Honor men, representing every war in which America has been engaged. There are said to be 300 of such Medal of Honor men living in the United States to-day, and more than 200 of those will be able to attend the services.

The body will be buried under the steps of the amphitheater at Arlington. More than 1,000 seats, or one-fifth of the seating capacity of the amphitheater, will be reserved for mothers of unknown soldiers who fell in the World War.

All creeds will unite at the bier of the Unknown Soldier, ecclesiastical spokesmen having been chosen from among those who gave spiritual comfort to America's soldiery in France.

This Armistice Day, 1921, will be second only to that date, three years ago, when the nation welcomed with delirious joy the announcement that the cause for which the Unknown Soldier had given his life was finally won.

The ceremonies at Arlington next Friday will show that the nation has not forgotten those among the marching two million who were led by the drums of liberty to graves that may be unnamed, but which are not unhonored.

